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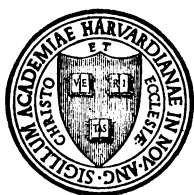
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DEPARTMENTAL
DITTIES
AND OTHER
VERSES

To
all Heads of Departments
and all Anglo-Indians

Richard Kipling ASSISTANT.
Department of Public Journalism,
Lahore District.

Departmental Ditties

By

Rudyard **K**ipling

*Typographical Facsimile, by
the De Vinne Press, of the
First (Lahore, 1886) Edition*



New York
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DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

We are very slightly changed
From the semi-apes who ranged
Pre-historic India.
Whoso drew the longest bow
Ran his brother down, you know.
As we run men down to-day.

"Dowb" the first of all his race
Met the Mammoth face to face
On the lake or in the cave :
Stole the steadiest canoe ;
Ate the quarry others slew ;
Died—and had the finest grave.

When they scratched the reindeer-bone
Someone made the sketch his own,
Filched it from the artist—then.
Even in those early days,
Won a simple Viceroy's praise
Through the toil of other men.

Ere they hewed the Sphinx's visage
Favouritism governed kissage
Even as it does in this age.

Who shall doubt "the secret hid
Under Cheop's pyramid "
Was that the contractor "did "
Cheops out of several millions ?
Or that Joseph's sudden rise
To Comptroller of Supplies
Was a fraud of monstrous size
On King Pharoah's swart Civilians ?

Thus the artless songs I sing
Do not deal with anything
New or never said before.
As it was in the beginning
Is to-day official sinning,
And shall be for ever more.

ARMY HEAD-QUARTERS.

Old is the song that I sing—
Old as my unpaid bills—
Old as the chickens that *Kitmutgars* bring
Men at dāk-bungalows—old as the Hills.

Ahasuerus Jenkins of the "Operatic Own,"
Was dowered with a tenor voice of *super-Santley* tone.
His views on equitation were, perhaps, a trifle queer,
He had no seat worth mentioning; but, Oh! he *had*
an ear.

He clubbed his wretched company a dozen times a
day,
He used to quit his charger in a parabolic way,
His method of saluting was the joy of all beholders;
But Ahasuerus Jenkins had a head upon his shoulders.

He took two months to Simla when the year was at
the spring,
And underneath the deodars eternally did sing.
He warbled like a *bul-bul*, but particularly at
Cornelia Agrippina, who was musical and fat.

She controlled a humble husband, who in turn control-
led a Dept.
Where Cornelia Agrippina's human singing-birds were
kept
From April to October on a nice retaining fee
Supplied, of course, *per mensem*, by the Indian Treasury.

Cornelia used to sing with him, and Jenkins used to play.
He praised unblushingly her notes, for he was false as
they;
So when the winds of April turned the verdant *doabs*
brown;
Cornelia told her husband:—"Tom, you mustn't send
him down."

They haled him from his regiment which didn't much
regret him;
They found for him an office stool, and on that stool
they set him,
To play with maps and catalogues three idle hours a
day,
And draw his plump retaining fee—I mean his double
pay.

Now, ever after dinner, when the coffee-cups are brought,
Ahasuerus waileth o'er the grand pianoforte
And, thanks to fair Cornelia, his fame hath waxen great
And Ahasuerus Jenkins is a power in the State.

STUDY OF AN ELEVATION, IN INDIAN INK.

This ditty is a string of lies,
But—how the deuce did Gubbins rise ?

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Stands at the top of the tree ;
And I muse in my bed on the reasons which led
To the hoisting of Potiphar G.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is seven years junior to me ;
Each bridge that he makes either " buckles " or breaks,
And his work is as rough as he.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is coarse as a chimpanzee ;
And I can't understand why you gave him your hand,
Lovely Mehitabel Lee.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is dear to the Powers that Be ;
For They bow and They smile in an affable style,
Which is seldom accorded to me.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is certain as certain can be
Of a highly paid post which is claimed by a host
Of seniors—including me.

Careless and lazy is he,
Greatly inferior to me.
What is the spell that you manage so well
Commonplace Potiphar G. ?

Lovely Mehitabel Lee,
Let me enquire of thee.
Should I have riz to what Potiphar is
Hadst thou been mated to me ?

A LEGEND OF THE F. O.

This is the reason why Rustum Beg,
Rajah of Kolazai
Drinketh the "simpkin" and brandy peg,
Maketh the money to fly.
Vexeth a Government, tender and kind,
Also—but this is a detail—blind.

Rustum Beg of Kolazai—slightly backward Native State—
Lusted for a C. S. I.—so began to sanitate.
Built a Gaol and Hospital—nearly built a City drain—
Till his faithful subjects all thought their ruler was insane.

Strange departures made he then—yea, Departments stranger still,
Half a dozen Englishmen helped the Rajah with a will;
Talked of noble aims and high—hinted of a future fine,
For the State of Kolazai, on a strictly Western line.

Rajah Rustum held his peace; lowered octroi dues a half,
Organized a State Police; purified the Civil Staff;
Settled cess and tax afresh in a very liberal way;
Cut temptations of the flesh; also cut the Bukshi's pay.

Roused his Secretariat to a fine Maratha fury,
By a Hookum hinting at supervision of *dasturi*.
Turned the State of Kolazai very nearly up-side down;
When the end of May was nigh waited his achievement's crown.

Then the Birthday Honours came. Sad to state and sad to see,
Stood against the Rajah's name nothing more than *C.I.E.*;

* * * * *

Things were lively for a week in the State of Kolazai
Even now the people speak of that time regretfully.

How he disendowed the Gaol—stopped at once the City drain;

Turned to beauty fair and frail—got his senses back again;

Doubled taxes, cesses, all; cleared away each new built *thana*;

Turned the two-lakh Hospital into a superb *Zenana*;

Heaped upon the Bukshi Sahib wealth and honours manifold;

Clad himself in Eastern garb—squeezed his people as of old.

Happy, happy Kolazai! Never more will Rustum Beg
Play to catch the "Lat Sahib's" eye. He prefers the
"simpkin" peg.

THE STORY OF URIAĦ.

"Now there were two men in one city; the one rich and the other poor."

Jack Barrett went to Quetta
Because they told him to.
He left his wife at Simla
On three-fourths his monthly "screw."
Jack Barrett died at Quetta,
Ere the next month's pay was due.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta.
He didn't understand
The reason of his transfer
From the pleasant mountain land.
The season was September,
And it killed him out of hand.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta
And there gave up the ghost,
A doing two men's duty
In that very healthy post;
And Mrs. Barrett mourned for him
Five lively months at most

Jack Barrett's bones at Quetta
Enjoy profound repose;
But I shouldn't be astonished
If *now* his spirit knows
The reason of his transfer
From the Himalayan snows.

And when the Last Great Bugle Call
Adown the Hurnai throbs;
When the last grim joke is entered
In the big black Book of Jobs,
And Quetta graveyards give again
Their victims to the air,
I shouldn't like to be the man
Who sent Jack Barrett there.

THE POST THAT FITTED.

Though tangled and twisted the course of true love,
This ditty explains
No tangle's so tangled it cannot improve
If the Lover has brains.

Ere the trooper bore him eastward, Sleary was engaged to marry

An attractive girl at Tunbridge, whom he called "my little Carrie."

Sleary's pay was very modest; Sleary was the other way.

Who can raise a two-plate dinner off eight paltry dubs a day?

Long he pondered o'er the question in his scantily-furnished quarters—

Then proposed to Minnie Boffkin, eldest of Judge Boffkin's daughters.

Certainly an impecunious Subaltern is not a catch;

But the Boffkins knew that Minnie mightn't make another match

So they recognized the business and, to feed and clothe the bride,

Got him made a Something Something somewhere on the Bombay side.

Anyhow the billet carried pay enough for him to marry—

As the artless Sleary put it:—"Just the thing for me and Carrie."

Did he, therefore, jilt Miss Boffkin—impulse of a baser mind?

No! He started epileptic fits of an appalling kind.

[Of his *modus operandi* only this much I could gather:—"Pears's shaving-sticks will give you little taste and lots of lather."]

Frequently in public places his affliction used to smite Sleary with distressing vigour—always in the Boffkin's sight.

Ere a week was over Minnie weepingly returned his ring;

Told him his "peculiar weakness" stopped all thought of marrying.

Sleary bore the information with a chastened holy joy, (Epileptic fits don't matter in political employ.)

Wired three short words to Carrie—took his ticket, packed his kit—

Bade farewell to Minnie Boffkin in one last long lingering fit.

Four weeks later Carrie Sleary read—and laughed until she wept—

Mrs. Boffkin's warning letter on the "wretched epilept."

Year by year, in pious patience, vengeful Mrs. Boffkin sits

Waiting for the Sleary babies to develope Sleary's fits.

PUBLIC WASTE.

Walpole talks of a "man and his price"—

List to a ditty queer—

The sale of a Deputy-Acting-Vice-
Resident-Engineer

Bought like a bullock, hoof and hide,
By the Little Tin Gods on the Mountain Side.

By the Laws of the Family Circle 'tis written in letters
of brass

That only a Colonel from Chatham can manage the
Railways of State,
Because of the gold on his breeks, and the subjects
wherein he must pass,
Because in all matters that deal not with Railways his
knowledge is great.

Now Exeter Battleby Tring had laboured from boyhood
to eld
On the Lines of the East and the West, and eke of the
North and South;
Many Lines had he built and surveyed—important the
posts which he held;
And the Lords of the Iron Horse were dumb when he
opened his mouth.

Black as the raven his garb, and his heresies jettier
still—

Hinting that Railways required decades of study and
knowledge—

Never clanked sword by his side—Vauban he knew not
nor drill—

Nor was his name on the list of the men who had gone
through the "College."

Wherefore the Little Tin Gods harried their little tin
souls,

Seeing he came not from Chatham, jingled no spurs at
his heels;

Knowing that, nevertheless, was he first on the Govern-
ment rolls

For the billet of—"Railway Instructor to Little Tin
Gods on Wheels."

Letters not seldom they wrote him, "having the honour
to state"

It would be better for all men if he were laid on the
shelf:

Much would accrue to his bank-book. an he consented
to wait

Until the Little Tin Gods built him a berth for himself.

"Special, well paid, and exempt from the Law of the
Fifty and Five,

Even to Ninety and Nine"—these were the terms of the
pact:

Thus did the Little Tin Gods (long may Their High-
nesses thrive!)

Silence his mouth with rupees; keeping their Circle
intact;

Appointing a Colonel from Chatham who managed the
Bhamo State line.

(The which was one mile and one furlong—a guaranteed
twenty-inch guage)

So Exeter Battleby Tring consented his claims to
resign;

And died on four thousand a month in the ninetieth year
of his age.

PINK DOMINOES.

"They are fools who kiss and tell,"
Wisely has the poet sung.
Men may hold all sorts of posts
If they'll only hold their tongue.

Jenny and me were engaged, you see,
On the eve of the Fancy Ball;
So a kiss or two was nothing to you
Or any one else at all.

Jenny would go in a domino—
Pretty and pink but warm—
While I attended clad in a splendid
Austrian uniform.

Now we had arranged, through notes exchanged,
Early that afternoon,
At Number Four to waltz no more,
But to sit in the dusk and spoon.

When Three was over, an eager lover,
I fled to the gloom outside;
And a Domino came out also
Whom I took for my future bride.

That is to say, in a casual way,
I slipped my arm around her;
With a kiss or two (which is nothing to you),
And ready to kiss I found her.

She turned her head and the name she said,
Was certainly not my own;
But ere I could speak, with a smothered shriek
She fled and left me alone.

Then Jenny came, and I saw with shame
She'd doffed her domino;
And I had embraced an alien waist.
But I did not tell her so.

Next morn I knew that there were two
Dominoes pink, and one
Had cloaked the spouse of Sir Julian Vouse,
Our big Political gun.

Sir J. was old, and her hair was gold,
And her eye was a blue cerulean;
And the name she said when she turned her head,
Was not in the least like "Julian."

Now wasn't it nice, when want of *pice*.
Forbade us twain to marry,
That old Sir J. in the kindest way,
Made me his Secretary?

THE MAN WHO COULD WRITE.

Shun—shun the Bowl! That fatal, facile drink
Has ruined many geese who dipped their quills in't.
Bribe, murder, marry, but steer clear of Ink
Save when you write receipts for paid-up bills in't.
There may be silver in the "blue-black"—all
I know of is the iron and the gall.

Boanerges Blitzen, servant of the Queen,
Is a dismal failure—is a Might-have-been.
In a luckless moment he discovered men
Rise to high position through a ready pen.

Boanerges Blitzen argued therefore:—"I,
With the selfsame weapon, can attain as high."
Only he did not possess when he made the trial,
Wicked wit of C-lv-n; irony of L—l.

[Men who spar with Government need, to back their
blows,
Something more than ordinary journalistic prose.]

Never young Civilian's prospects were so bright.
Till an Indian paper found that he could write.
Never young Civilian's prospects were so dark,
When the wretched Blitzen wrote to make a mark.

Certainly he scored it, bold and black and firm—
In that Indian paper made his seniors squirm.
Quoted office scandals; wrote the tactless truth—
Was there ever known a more misguided youth?

When the Rag he wrote for praised his plucky game.
Boanerges Blitzen felt that this was Fame:
When the men he wrote of shook their heads and swore,
Boanerges Blitzen only wrote the more

Posed as Young Ithuriel, resolute and grim,
Till he found promotion didn't come to him;
Till he found that "wiggings" weekly were his lot
And his many districts curiously hot.

Till he found his furlough strangely hard to win.
Boanerges Blitzen didn't care—a pin:
Then it seemed to dawn on him something wasn't
right—
Boanerges Blitzen put it down to "spite

Languished in a district desolate and dry;
Watched the Local Government yearly pass him by;
Wondered where the hitch was; called it most unfair

That was seven years ago, and he still is there.

A CODE OF MORALS.

Lest you should think this story true
I merely mention I
Evolved it lately. 'Tis my ninth
Unmitigated misstatement.

Now Jones had left his new-wed bride to keep his house
in order,
And hied away to the Hurrum Hills above the Afghan
border,
To sit on a rock with a heliograph; but ere he left he
taught
His wife the working of the Code that sets the miles at
naught.

And Love had made him very sage, as Nature made her
fair;

So Cupid and Apollo linked, *per* heliograph, the pair.

At dawn across the Hurrum Hills, he flashed her
council wise—

At e'en the dying sunset bore her husband's homilies.

He warned her 'gainst seductive youths in scarlet clad
and gold,

As much as 'gainst the blandishments paternal of the
old;

But kept his gravest warnings for (hereby the ditty
hangs)

That snowy-haired Lothario, Lieutenant-General Bangs.

'Twas General Bangs, with Aide and Staff, that tittupped
on the way,

When they beheld a heliograph tempestuously at play.

They thought of Border risings, and of Stations sacked
and burnt—

So stopped to take the message down—and this is what
they learnt:—

"Dash dot dot, dot, dot dash, dot dash dot" twice. The
General swore:—

"Was ever General Officer addressed as 'dear' before?"

"'My Love' i 'faith! 'My Duck,' Gadzooks! 'My-darling
popsy-wop'!"

"Spirit of great Lord Wolseley, *who* is on that mountain-
top?"

The artless Aide-de-Camp was mute; the gilded Staff
were still

As, dumb with pent-up mirth, they booked that message
from the hill;

For clear as summer lightning flare, the husband's
warning ran—

"Don't dance or ride with General Bangs—a most
immoral man."

[At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he flashed her
council wise—

But, howsoever Love be blind, the world at large hath
eyes.]

With damnatory dot and dash he heliographed his wife
Some interesting details of the General's private life.

The artless Aide-de-Camp was mute; the shining Staff
were still,

And red and ever redder grow the General's shaven gill.

And this is what he said at last (his feelings matter
not):—

"I think we've tapped a private line. Hi! Threes about
there! Trot!"

All honour unto Bangs, for ne'er did Jones thereafter
know

By word or act official who read off that helio;

But the tale is on the Frontier, and from Michni to
Mooltan

They know the worthy General as "that most immoral
man."

THE LAST DEPARTMENT.

Twelve hundred million men are spread
About this Earth, and I and You
Wonder when You and I are dead . . .
"What *will* those luckless millions do?"

"None whole or clean" we cry "or free from stain
Of favour." Wait awhile, till we attain
The Last Department where nor fraud nor fools,
Nor grade nor greed, shall trouble us again.

Fear, Favour or Affection— what are these
To the grim Head who claims our services?
I never knew a wife or interest yet
Delay that *pukka* step, miscalled "decease";

When leave, long over-due, none can deny;
When idleness of all Eternity
Becomes our furlough; and the marigold
Our thriftless, bullion-minting Treasury.

Transferred to the Eternal Settlement,
Each in his strait wood-scantled office pent,
No longer Brown reverses Smith's appeals,
Or Jones records his Minute of Dissent.

And One long since a "pillar of the Court"
As mud between the beams thereof is wrought;
And One who wrote on phosphates for the crops
Is subject-matter of his own report.

[These be the glorious ends whereto we pass—
Let Him who *Is*, go call on Him who *Was*;
And He shall see the *mallie* steals the slab
For currie-grinder, and for goats the grass.]

A breath of wind, a Border bullet's flight,
A draught of water, or a horse's fright—
The droning of the fat *Sheristadar*
Ceases, the punkah stops, and falls the night

For You or Me. Do those who live decline
The step that offers, or their work resign?
Trust me, To-day's "Most Indispensables,"
Five hundred men can take your place or mine.

OTHER VERSES.

TO THE UNKNOWN GODDESS.

Will you conquer my heart with your beauty; my soul
going out from afar?

Shall I fall to your hand as a victim of crafty and cau-
tious *shikar*?

Have I met you and passed you already, unknowing, un-
thinking and blind?

Shall I met you next season at Simla, Oh sweetest and
best of your kind?

Does the P. and O. bear you to meward, or, clad in short
frocks in the West,

Are you growing the charms that shall capture and
torture the heart in my breast?

Will you stay in the Plains till September—my passion
as warm as the day?

Will you bring me to book on the Mountains or where
the thermantidotes play?

When the light of your eyes shall make pallid the mean
lesser lights I pursue,

And the charm of your presence shall lure me from
love of the gay "thirteen-two;"

When the peg and the pigskin shall please not; when I
buy me Calcutta-built clothes;

When I quit "the delight of wild asses;" forswearing
the swearing of oaths;

As a deer to the hand of the hunter when I turn 'mid
the gibes of my friends;

When the days of my freedom are numbered, and the life
of the bachelor ends.

Ah Goddess! child, spinster or widow—as of old on Mars
Hill when they raised

To the God whom they knew not an altar—so I, a young
Pagan have praised

The Goddess I know not nor worship; yet, if half that
men tell me be true,

You will come in the future, and therefore these verses
are written to you.

THE RUPAIYAT OF OMAR KAL'VIN.

[Allowing for the difference 'twixt prose and rhymed exaggeration, this ought to reproduce the sense of what Sir A——told the nation six months ago, when Government struck from our incomes two per cent.]

Now the New Year, reviving last Year's Debt,
The Thoughtful Fisher casteth wide his Net;
So I with begging Dish and ready Tongue
Assail all Men for all that I can get.

Imports indeed are gone with all their Dues —
Lo! Salt a Lever that I dare not use,
Nor may I ask the Tillers in Bengal—
Surely my Kith and Kin will not refuse!

Pay—and I promise by the Dust of Spring,
Retrenchment. If my Promises can bring
Comfort, Ye have Them now a thousand fold.
By Allah! I will promise *Anything*.

Indeed, indeed, Retrenchment oft before
I swore—but did I mean it when I swore?
And then, and then, We wandered to the Hills.
And so the Little Less became Much More.

Whether at Boileaugunge or Babylon,
I know not how the wretched Thing is done.
The Items of Receipt grow surely small;
The Items of Expense mount one by one.

I cannot help it—What have I to do
With One and Five or Four, or Three or Two?
Let Scribes spit Blood and Sulphur as they please,
Or Statesmen call me foolish—Heed not You.

Behold, I promise—Anything You will.
Behold, I greet You with an empty Till—
Ah! fellow Sinners, of your charity
Seek not the reason of the Dearth but fill.

For if I sinned and fell, where lies the Gain
Of Knowledge? Would it ease You of your Pain
To know the tangled Threads of Revenue.
I ravel deeper in a hopeless Skein?

"Who hath not Prudence"—what was it I said,
Of Her who paints her Eyes and tires her Head,
And jibes and mocks the People in the Street,
And fawns upon them for her thriftless Bread?

Accursed is She of Eve's daughters—She
Hath cast off Prudence, and her End shall be
Destruction . . Brethren, of your Bounty grant
Some portion of your daily Bread to *Me*.

MY RIVAL.

I go to concert, party, ball—
What profit is in these ?
I sit alone against the wall
And strive to look at ease.
The incense that is mine by right
They burn before Her shrine ;
And that's because I'm seventeen
And She is forty-nine.

I cannot check my girlish blush,
My colour comes and goes ;
I redden to my finger-tips,
And sometimes to my nose.
But She is white where white should be,
And red where red should shine—
The blush that flies at seventeen.
Is fixed at forty-nine.

I wish I had Her constant cheek ;
I wish that I could sing
All sorts of funny little songs,
Not quite the proper thing.
I'm very *gauche* and very shy,
Her jokes aren't in my line ;
And, worst of all, I'm seventeen
While She is forty-nine.

The young men come, the young men go,
Each pink and white and neat,
She's older than their mothers, but
They grovel at Her feet.
They walk beside Her '*rickshaw* wheels—
None ever walk by mine ;
And that's because I'm seventeen
And She is forty-nine.

She rides with half a dozen men,
(She calls them " boys " and " mashes ")
I trot along the Mall alone :
My prettiest frocks and sashes
Don't help to fill my programme up,
And vainly I repine
From ten to three A.M. Ah me !
Would I were forty-nine.

She calls me " darling," " pet " and " dear—
And " sweet retiring maid ; "
I'm always at the back I know
She puts me in the shade.
She introduces me to men—
Old lovers I opine—
For sixty takes to seventeen
Nineteen to forty-nine.

But even She must older grow
And end Her dancing days,
She can't go on for ever so
At concerts, balls, and plays.
One ray of priceless hope I see
Before my footsteps shine ;
Just think, that She'll be eighty-one
When I am forty-nine !

THE LOVERS' LITANY.

Eyes of grey—a sodden quay,
Driving rain and falling tears,
As the steamer wears to sea
In a parting storm of cheers.
Sing, for Faith and Hope are high—
None so true as you and I—
Sing the Lovers' Litany :—
" Love like ours can never die."

Eyes of black—a throbbing keel,
Milky foam to left and right;
Whispered converse near the wheel
In the brilliant tropic night.
Cross that rules the Southern Sky .
Stars that sweep and wheel and fly !
Hear the Lovers' Litany :—
" Love like ours can never die."

Eyes of brown—a dusty plain
Split and parched with heat of June
Flying hoof and tightened rein;
Hearts that beat the old old tune.
Side by side the horses fly,
Frame we now the old reply
Of the Lovers' Litany :—
" Love like ours can never die."

Eyes of blue—the Simla Hills
Silvered with the moonlight hoar ;
Pleading of the waltz that thrills,
Dies and echoes round Benmore.
" Mabel," " Officers," " Goodbye,"
Glamour, wine and witchery—
On my soul's sincerity,
" Love like ours can never die."

Maidens of your charity
Pity my most luckless state.
Four times Cupid's debtor I—
Bankrupt in quadruplicate.
Spite of Cupid's perjury
If another maid would try
I dare sing the Litany—
Sing the Lovers' Litany
" Love like ours can never die."

DIVIDED DESTINIES.

It was an artless *Bandar*, and he danced upon a pine,
And much I wondered how he lived, and where the beast
might dine,
And many many other things, till, o'er my morning smoke,
I slept the sleep of idleness and dreamt that *Bandar*
spoke.

He said :—" Oh man of many clothes ! Sad crawler on
the Hills !

Observe, I know not Ranken's shop, nor Ranken's monthly
bills !

" I take no heed to trousers or the coats that you call
dress ;

" Nor am I plagued with little *chits* for little drinks at
mess.

" I steal the bunnia's grain at morn, at noon and eventide ;
" (For he is fat and I am spare), I roam the mountain
side.

" I follow no man's *gharri*, and no, never in my life

" Have I flirted at Peliti's with another *Bandar's* wife.

" Oh man of futile fopperies—unnecessary wraps !

" I own no ponies in the hills, I drive no tall-wheeled
traps.

" I buy me not twelve-button gloves, 'short-sizes' eke,
or rings,

" Nor do I waste at Hamilton's my wealth on 'pretty
things.'

" I quarrel with my wife at home, we never fight abroad ;

" But Mrs. B. has grasped the fact I am her only lord.

" I never heard of fever ; dumps nor debts depress my
soul ;

" And I pity and despise you !" Here he pouched my
breakfast-roll.

His hide was very mangey and his face was very red,
And ever and anon he scratched with energy his head :
His manners were not always nice, but *how* my spirit
sighed

To be an artless *Bandar* loose upon the mountain side !

So I answered :—" Gentle *Bandar*, an Inscrutable Decree,
" Makes thee a gleesome fleasome Thou and me a wretch-
ed Me.

" Go ! Depart in peace, my brother, to thy home amid
the pine ;

" Yet forget not, once a mortal wished to change his lot
with thine."

THE MARE'S NEST.

Jane Austen Beecher Stowe de Rouse
Was good beyond all earthly need;
But, on the other hand, her spouse
Was very very bad indeed.
He smoked cigars, called churches "slow,"
And raced—but this she did not know.

For Belial Machiavelli kept
The little fact a secret, and
Though o'er his minor sins she wept,
Jane Austen did not understand
That Lilly—thirteen-two and bay—
Absorbed one half her husband's pay.

She was so good she made him worse;
(Some women are like this I think)
He taught her parrot how to curse,
Her Assam *hooluk* how to drink.
He vexed her righteous soul until
She went up, and he went down hill.

Then came the crisis, strange to say,
Which turned a good wife to a better.
A telegraphic peon one day
Brought her—now had it been a letter
For Belial Machiavelli, I
Know Jane would just have let it lie.

But twas a telegram instead,
Marked "urgent," and her duty plain
To open it. Jane Austen read:—
"Your Lilly's got a cough again.
"Can't understand why she is kept
"At your expense." Jane Austen wept.

It was a misdirected wire,
Her husband was at Shaitanpore.
She let him have it, hot as fire,
Through six thin foreign sheets or more.
Sent off that letter, wrote another
To her solicitor—and mother.

Then Belial Machiavelli saw
Her error (and I trust his own)
Wired to the minion of the Law,
And travelled wifeward—not alone.
For "Lilly"—thirteen two and bay—
Came in a horse-box all the way.

There was a scene—a weep or two—
And lots of kisses. Austen Jane
Rode "Lilly" all the season through
And never opened "tars" again.
She races now with Belial. This
Is very sad, but so it is.

POSSIBILITIES.

Ay, lay him 'neath the Simla pine—
A fortnight fully to be missed.
Behold, we lose our fourth at whist
A chair is vacant where we dine.

His place forgets him; other men
Have bought his ponies, guns and traps.
His fortune is the Great Perhaps
And that cool rest-house down the glen

Whence he shall hear as spirits may
Our mundane revel on the height;
Shall watch each flashing *'rickshaw* light
Sweep on to dinner, dance and play.

Benmore shall woo him to the ball
With lighted rooms and braying band;
And he shall hear and understand
Dream Faces better than us all.

For, think you, as the vapours flee
Across Sanjaolie after rain,
His soul may climb the hill again
To each old field of victory

Unseen, whom women held so dear,
The strong man's yearning to his kind
Shall shake at most the window-blind
Or dull awhile the card-room's cheer.

In his own place of power unknown,
His Light o' Love another's flame,
His dearest pony galloped lame,
And he an alien and alone

Yet may he meet with many a friend,
Shrewd shadows, lingering long-unseen
Among us when "*God save the Queen*"
Shows even "extras" have an end.

And when we leave the heated room,
And when at four the lights expire,
The crew shall gather round the fire
And mock our laughter in the gloom.

Talk as we talked, and, they ere death—
Flirt wanly; dance in ghostly-wise
With ghosts of tunes for melodies,
And vanish at the morning's breath.

PAGETT, M. P.

The Toad beneath the harrow knows
Exactly where each tooth-point goes.
The Butterfly upon the road
Preaches contentment to that Toad.

Pagett, M. P., was a liar and a fluent liar therewith.
He spoke of the heat of India as the "Asian Solar Myth."
Came on a four-months' visit, to "study the East," in
November;
And I got him to sign an agreement vowing to stay till
September.

March began with the *kōil* Pagett was cool and gay.
Called me a "bloated Brahmin;" talked of my "princely
pay."
March went out with the roses. "Where is your heat?"
says he.
"Coming." says I to Pagett. "Skittles!" says Pagett,
M. P.

April came in with the punkah, coolies, and prickly-heat.
Pagett was dear to mosquitoes: sandflies found him a
treat.
He grew speckled and lumpy—hammered, I grieve to say.
Aryan brothers who farmed him, in an illiberal way.

May began with a dust-storm. Pagett went down with
the sun.
All the delights of the season tickled him one by one.
Imprimis—ten days "liver," due to his drinking beer;
Later, a dose of fever—slight but he called it severe.

Dysent'ry touched him in June, after the *Chota Bursat*—
Lowered his portly person—made him yearn to depart.
He didn't call me a "Brahmin" or "bloated" or "over-
paid,"
But seemed to think it a wonder that any one ever stayed

July was a trifle unhealthy. Pagett was ill with fear,
Called it the "cholera morbus;" hinted that life was
dear—

Dearer than written agreements. So I suspected, and kept
Most of his kit in my godown locked, and he nearly wept.

We reached a hundred and twenty, once in the Court at
noon.

[I've mentioned Pagett was portly] Pagett went off in a
swoon.

That was an end of the business. Pagett, the perjured, fled,
With a practical working knowledge of "Solar Myths" in
his head.

And I laughed as I drove from the Station; but the mirth
died out on my lips

As I thought of the fools like Pagett who write of their
"Eastern trips,"

And the sneers of the travelled idiot who duly mis-
governs the land;

And I prayed to the Lord to deliver another one into my
hand.

THE PLEA OF THE SIMLA DANCERS.

Too late alas! our song,
To remedy the wrong;
The rooms are taken from us, swept and garnished for their fate :
But these tear-besprinkled pages
Shall attest to future ages
That we cried against the crime of it—too late alas! too late!

“What have *we* ever done to bear this grudge?”

Was there no room save only in Benmore
For docket, *dufter*, and for office drudge,
That you usurp our smoothest dancing floor?
Must baboos do their work on polished teak?
Are ball-rooms fitted for the ink you spill?
Was there no other, cheaper house to seek?
You might have left them all at “Strawberry
Hill.”

We never harmed you! Innocent our guise;
Dainty our shining feet; our voices low,
And we revolved to divers melodies,
And we were happy—but a year ago.
To-night, the moon that watched our lightsome wiles—
That beamed upon us through the deodars—
Is wan with gazing on official files,
And desecrating desks disgust the stars.

Nay! by the memory of tuneful nights :
Nay! by the witchery of flying feet;
Nay! by the glamour of fordone delights;
By all things merry, musical and meet;
By wine that sparkled; and by sparkling eyes;
By wailing waltz; by reckless gallop's strain;
By dim verandahs; and by soft replies,
Give us our ravished ball-room back again.

Or—hearken to the curse we lay on you !
The ghosts of waltzes shall perplex your brain,
And murmurs of past merriment pursue
Your 'wildered clerks that they indite in vain.
And, when you count your poor provincial millions,
The only figures that your pen shall frame,
Shall be the figures of dear, dead cotillions
Danced out in tumult long before you came.

Yes! “*See Saw*” shall upset your estimates,
“*Dream Faces*” shall your heavy heads bemuse;
Because your hand, unheeding, desecrates
Our temple—fit for higher, worthier use.
And all the long verandahs, eloquent
With echoes of a score of Simla years,
Shall plague you with unbidden sentiment—
Babbling of kisses, laughter, love and tears.

So shall you mazed amid old memories stand;
So shall you toil and shall accomplish naught;
And ever in your ears a phantom band
Shall blare away the staid, official thought.
Wherefore—and ere this awful curse be spoken,
Cast out your swarthy, sacrilegious train,
And give—ere dancing cease and hearts be broken—
Give us our ravished ball-room back again!

CERTAIN MAXIMS OF HAFIZ.

1

If It be pleasant to look on, stalled in the packed *Serai*,
Does not the Young Man try Its temper and pace ere he
buy ?

If She be pleasant to look on, what does the Young Man
say ?

“ Lo ! She is pleasant to look on, give Her to me to-day.”

2

Yea though a Kafir die, to him, is remitted *Jehannum*
If he borrowed in life from a native at sixty per cent
per annum.

3

Blister we not for *bursati* ? So, when the soul is vexed,
The pain of one maiden's *jawab* is drowned in the pain of
the next.

4

Hearts that be seared with passion and hocks that the
iron sears,
Though they may irk their owner last for a hundred
years.

5

Who are the rulers of Ind—to whom shall we bow the
knee ?

Make your peace with the women and men will make
you L. G.

6

Does the woodpecker flit round the young *ferash* ? Does
grass clothe a new-built wall ?

Is she under thirty the woman who holds a boy in her
thrall ?

7

If She grow suddenly gracious—reflect. Is it all for thee ?
The Blackbuck is stalked through the bullock, and Man
[through jealousy.

8

Seek not for favour of women. So shall ye find it indeed.
Does not the boar break cover just when you're lighting
[a weed ?

9

If He play, being young and unskilful, for shekels of silver
and gold,

Take his money, my Son, praising Allah. The kid was
[ordained to be sold.

10

With a “ weed ” among men or horses verily this is the
best

That you work him in office or dog-cart lightly,—but give
[him no rest.

11

Pleasant the snaffle of Courtship, improving the
manners and carriage ;

But the colt who is wise will abstain from the terrible
[thorn-bit of Marriage.

12

As the thriftless gold of the *babul* so is the gold that we
spend

On a Derby Sweep, or our neighbour's wife, or the horse
that we buy from a friend.

13

The ways of a man with a maid be strange, yet simple
and tame

To the ways of a man with a horse, when selling or racing
that same,

THE MOON OF OTHER DAYS.

Beneath the deep verandah's shade,
When bats begin to fly,
I sit me down and watch—alas!
Another evening die.
Blood-red behind the sere *ferash*
She rises through the haze.
Sainted Diana! Can *that* be
The Moon of Other Days?

Ah! shade of little Kitty Smith,
Sweet saint of Kensington!
Say, was it ever thus at home
The Moon of August shone
When arm in arm we wandered long
Through Putney's evening haze,
And Hammersmith was Heaven beneath
The Moon of Other Days?

But Wandle's stream is Suttlej now,
And Putney's evening haze
The dust that half a hundred kine
Before my window raise.
Unkempt, unclean, athwart the mist
The seething city looms.
In place of Putney's golden gorse
The sickly *babul* blooms.

Glare down old Hecate through the dust
And bid the pie-dog yell;
Draw from the drain its typhoid-germ,
From each *bazar* its smell.
Aye, suck the fever from the tank
And sap my strength therewith,
Thank Heaven you show a smiling face
To little Kitty Smith!

THE UNDERTAKER'S HORSE.

To-tschin-shu is condemned to death. How can he
drink tea with the Executioner? "Japanese Proverb.

The eldest son bestrides him,
And the pretty daughter rides him,
And I meet him oft o' mornings on the Course;
And I feel within my bosom
An emotion chill and gruesome
As I canter past the Undertaker's Horse.

Neither shies he nor is restive,
But a hideously suggestive
Trot, of five full miles an hour, he most affects;
And the cadence of his hoof-beats
To my mind this grim reproof beats:—
"Mend your pace, my friend. I'm coming. Who's
the next?"

Ah! stud-bred of ill-omen,
I have watched the strongest go—men
Of pith and might and muscle—at your heels,
Down the plantain-bordered highway,
(Heaven send it ne'er be my way!)
In a lacquered box and jetty upon wheels.

Answer, sombre beast and dreary,
Where is Brown, the young, the cheery?
Smith the pride of all his friends and half the
Force?
You were at that last dread *dāk*
We accomplish at a walk,
Bring them back to me, O Undertaker's Horse!

With your mane unhogged and flowing,
And your curious way of going,
And that business-like black crimping of your tail,
E'en with beauty on your back, Sir,
Pacing as a lady's hack, Sir,
What wonder when I meet you I turn pale?

It may be you wait your time, Beast,
Till I write my last bad rhyme, Beast,
Quit the sunlight, cut the rhyming, drop the glass;
Follow after with the others,
Where some dusky heathen smothers
Us with marigolds in lieu of English grass.

Or, perchance in years to follow,
I shall watch your plump sides hollow,
See Carnifex (gone lame) become a corse;
See old age at last o'erpower you,
And the Station Pack devour you,
I shall chuckle then, O Undertaker's Horse!

But to insult, jibe and quest I've
Still that hideously suggestive
Trot (professional and placid) he affects;
And I hear it aye behind me
In what place soe'er I find me:—
"Sure to catch you soon or later. Who's the next."

ARITHMETIC ON THE FRONTIER.

A great and glorious thing it is
To learn, for seven years or so;
The Lord knows what of that and this,
Ere reckoned fit to face the foe—
The flying bullet down the Pass,
That has for text "all flesh is grass."

Three hundred pounds per annum spent
On making brain and body meeter
For all the murderous intent
Comprised in "villanous salpetre;"
And after—ask the Yustfzaies
What comes of all our 'ologies.

A scrimmage in a Border Station—
A tanter down some dark defile—
Two thousand pounds of education
Drops to a ten-rupee *jezail*!
The Crammer's boast, the Squadron's pride,
Shot like a rabbit in a ride.

No proposition Euclid wrote,
No formulæ the text-books know,
Will turn the bullet from your coat,
Or ward the sabre's downward blow;
Strike hard who cares—shoot straight who can—
The odds are on the cheaper man.

One sword-knot stolen from the camp
Will pay for all the school expenses
Of any Kurrum Valley scamp.
Who knows no word of moods and tenses;
But, being blessed with perfect sight,
Picks off our messmates left and right.

With home-bred hordes the hill-sides team,
The troop-ships bring us one by one
At vast expense of time and steam
To slay Afridís where they run.
The "captives of our bow and spear"
Are cheap alas! as we are dear.

GIFFEN'S DEBT.

Imprimis he was "broke." Thereafter left
His regiment and, later, took to drink ;
Then, having lost the balance of his friends,
"Went Fantee"—joined the people of the land.
Turned three parts Mussalman and one Hindu,
And lived among the Gauri villagers
Who gave him shelter and a wife or twain,
And boasted that a *pukka*, full-blood *sahib*
Had come among them. Thus he spent his time,
Deeply indebted to the village *shroff*,
(Who never asked for payment) always drunk,
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels ;
Forgetting that he was an Englishman.

You know they dammed the Gauri with a dam,
And all the good contractors scamped their work,
And all the bad material at hand
Was used to dam the Gauri—which was right,
And just and proper Well, the Gauri burst,
And several hundred thousand cubic tons
Of water dropped into the valley flop,
And drowned some five and twenty villagers,
And did a lakh or so of detriment
To crops and cattle. When the flood went down
We found him dead, beneath an old dead horse,
Some six miles down the valley. So we said
He was a victim to the Demon Drink,
And moralized upon him for a week,
And then forgot him. Which was natural.

But, in the valley of the Gauri, men,
Beneath the shadow of the big new dam,
Relate a foolish legend of the flood ;
Accounting for the little loss of life
(Only some five and twenty villagers)
In this wise :— On the evening of the flood
They heard the groaning of the rotten *bund*,
And voices of the Mountain Devils. Then,
An incarnation of the local God,
Mounted upon a monster-neighing horse,
And flourishing a flail-like whip came down,
Breathing ambrosia, to the villages,
And fell upon the simple villagers
With yells beyond the power of mortal throat,
And blows beyond the power of mortal hand ;
And smote them with the flail-like whip, and drove
Them clamorous with terror up the hill,
And scattered, with the monster-neighing steed,
Their crazy cottages about their ears,
And generally cleared those villages.
Then came the water, and the local God
Breathing ambrosia, flourishing his whip,
And mounted on his monster-neighing steed,
Went down the valley with the flying trees
And residue of homesteads, while they watched
Safe on the mountain-side these wondrous things,
And knew that they were much beloved of Heaven.
Wherefore, and when the dam was newly built,
They raised a temple to the local God,
And burnt all manner of unsavoury things
Upon his altar, and created priests,
And blew into a conch and banged a bell ;
And told the story of the Gauri flood
With circumstance and much embroidery.
So he, the whiskified objectionable,
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels,
Became the tutelary Deity
Of all the Gauri valley villagers.

IN SPRING TIME.

My garden blazes brightly with the rose-bush and the peach,

And the *kōil* sings above them in the *siris* by the well,

From the creeper-covered trellis comes the squirrel's chattering speech,

And the blue jay screams and flutters where the cheery *sāt bhai* dwell.

But the rose has lost its fragrance and the *kōil's* note is strange ;

I am sick of endless sunshine, sick of blossom-burdened bough.

Give me back the leafless woodlands where the winds of Springtime range--

Give me back one day in England, for it's Spring in England now

Through the pines the gusts are booming, o'er the brown fields blowing chill,

From the furrow of the plough-share steams the fragrance of the loam,

And the hawk nests on the cliffside, and the jackdaw in the hill,

And my heart is back in England 'mid the sights and sounds of home.

But the garland of the sacrifice this wealth of rose and peach is,

Ah *kōil*, little *kōil*, singing on the *siris* bough !

In my ears the knell of exile your ceaseless bell-like speech is--

Can you tell me aught of England or of Spring in England now ?

